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PART TWO OF SEVEN
UNFOLDING COLLISION
QUASAR™

GUEST-STARRING THE
Fantastic Four!

50
YEARS
A
OF
CAPTAIN AMERICA
1941 - 1991



ASSAULT ON EON!

WENDELL VAUGHN... THE FIRST EARTH MAN EVER APPOINTED PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE. BONDED TO THE ENERGY-TRANSFORMING QUANTUM-BANDS THAT ARE BOTH WEAPONS AND SYMBOLS OF HIS STATION, HE FIGHTS AN ONGOING BATTLE TO DEFEND ALL LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE FROM COSMIC EVIL!

STAN LEE PRESENTS... QUASAR!

SOMEWHERE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MILKY WAY, TWO COSMIC BEINGS MEET. THE LARGER OF THE TWO IS ONE OF THE GREAT ABSTRACT ENTITIES OF OUR UNIVERSE, NEVER BEFORE GLIMPSED BY A SINGLE DENIZEN OF EARTH.

PROLOGUE:

THE SMALLER OF THE TWO IS A DISEMBODED SEEKER OF KNOWLEDGE WHO WAS LAST SEEN IN THE VICINITY OF SATURN QUESTIONING THE ETHERIAL ETERNAL KRONOS ABOUT LIFE ON THE HIGHER PLANES OF EXISTENCE.

AS WE MEASURE TIME ON EARTH, THIS ENCOUNTER OCCURRED IN THE RECENT PAST.

...A QUESTION FOR YOU THEN, ANOMALY... IF THE UNIVERSE ITSELF SPRANG FORTH FROM AN ANOMALOUS SINGULARITY IN THE STUFF OF NON-SPACE/ NON-TIME...

...AND YOU ARE THE VERY EMBODIMENT OF ALL ANOMALIES THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE, THEN CAN IT NOT BE SAID THAT YOU ARE THE GREAT AUTHOR OF THE UNIVERSE?

THE STALKING HORSE

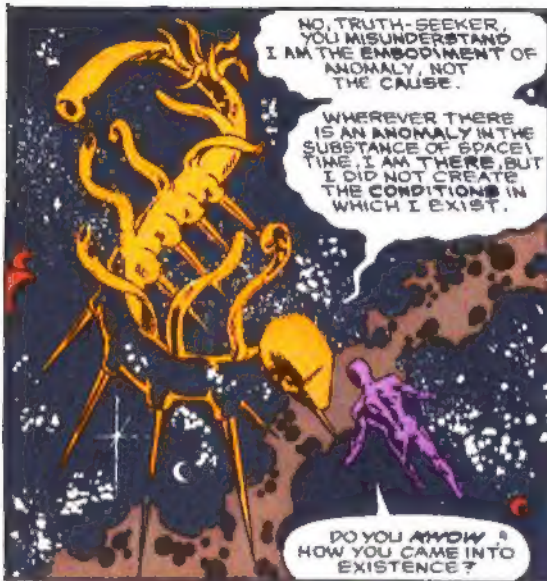
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NO, TRUTH-SEEKER,
YOU MISUNDERSTAND
I AM THE EMBODIMENT OF
ANOMALY, NOT
THE CAUSE.

WHEREVER THERE
IS AN ANOMALY IN THE
SUBSTANCE OF SPACE/
TIME, I AM THERE, BUT
I DID NOT CREATE
THE CONDITIONS IN
WHICH I EXIST.

DO YOU *ANOM*?
HOW YOU CAME INTO
EXISTENCE?



I WAS NOT BORN AN
ABSTRACT ENTITY. CONCEPT
EMBODIMENT WAS A
FUNCTION. I ASSUMED WHEN
I DETERMINED TO MANIFEST
IN THIS UNIVERSE, I
PERCEIVED AN UNFILLED
CONCEPTUAL NICHE--

--AND BIOFORMED
MYSELF TO SUITABLY
FILL IT.

I SEE!
THEN ALL
SUCH ABSTRACT
ENTITIES--*DEATH*,
OBVIOUS,
ETERNITY--
ORIGINATE
BEYOND THIS
UNIVERSE AND
TAKE ON THEIR
COSMIC ROLES AS
YOU DID?



PERHAPS
PERHAPS NOT,
I AM ANOMALY,
AFTER ALL.

WELL, YOU'VE BEEN
MOST *ENLIGHTENING*.
THANK YOU FOR
YOUR *TIME*.

TIME IS NOT PRECIOUS
TO ME. TO A TIME BEING
LIKE *ETERNITY* OR *BOH*.
PERHAPS, BUT NOT ME.



HOW ABOUT *LIFE* THEN,
ANOMALY? IS THAT
VALUELESS TO YOU
AS WELL?

WHAT IF I WERE TO
TAKE IT FROM YOU?
WHAT IF I WERE TO *ROB* YOU
OF THE SELF-PRESERVATIVE
MOTION OF YOUR *ORGANIC*
MOLECULES?

WOULD YOU *CARE*
OR ARE YOU *BEYOND*
CARING? COULD YOU
STILL REPRESENT THE
CONCEPT OF ANOMALY
IF YOU WERE *DEAD*--



OBVIOUS!
INTO YOUR BOSOM
I DISPATCH
THIS *SPRIT*!

TIME: THE PRESENT. PLACE: THE EDGE OF EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE.

THE PLAYERS:
QUASAR, EARTH'S
FORMER COSMIC
CHAMPION, NOW
UNCONSCIOUS
INSIDE AN ENERGY-
BUBBLE OF HIS
OWN MAKING...

**THE JACK OF
HEARTS,** LEADER
OF A RASTAG BAND
OF SUPERHUMAN
REFUGEES BOUND
FOR THEIR NATIVE
EARTH...

THE PRESENCE,
NUCLEAR-POWERED
RUSSIAN DISSIDENT
AND FELLOW
REFUGEE...

...AND STARLIGHT,
FORMER SOVIET SUPER
HERO PERSUADED BY
THE PRESENCE TO BE
HIS COSMICALLY-
ENDOWED
CONSORT...

THE SITUATION:
DIRE.

NOW QUICKLY--
**FINISH HIM
OFF!** POINT BLANK
BLASTS TO HIS
TEMPLES SHOULD
BE SUFFICIENT
TO DO IT.

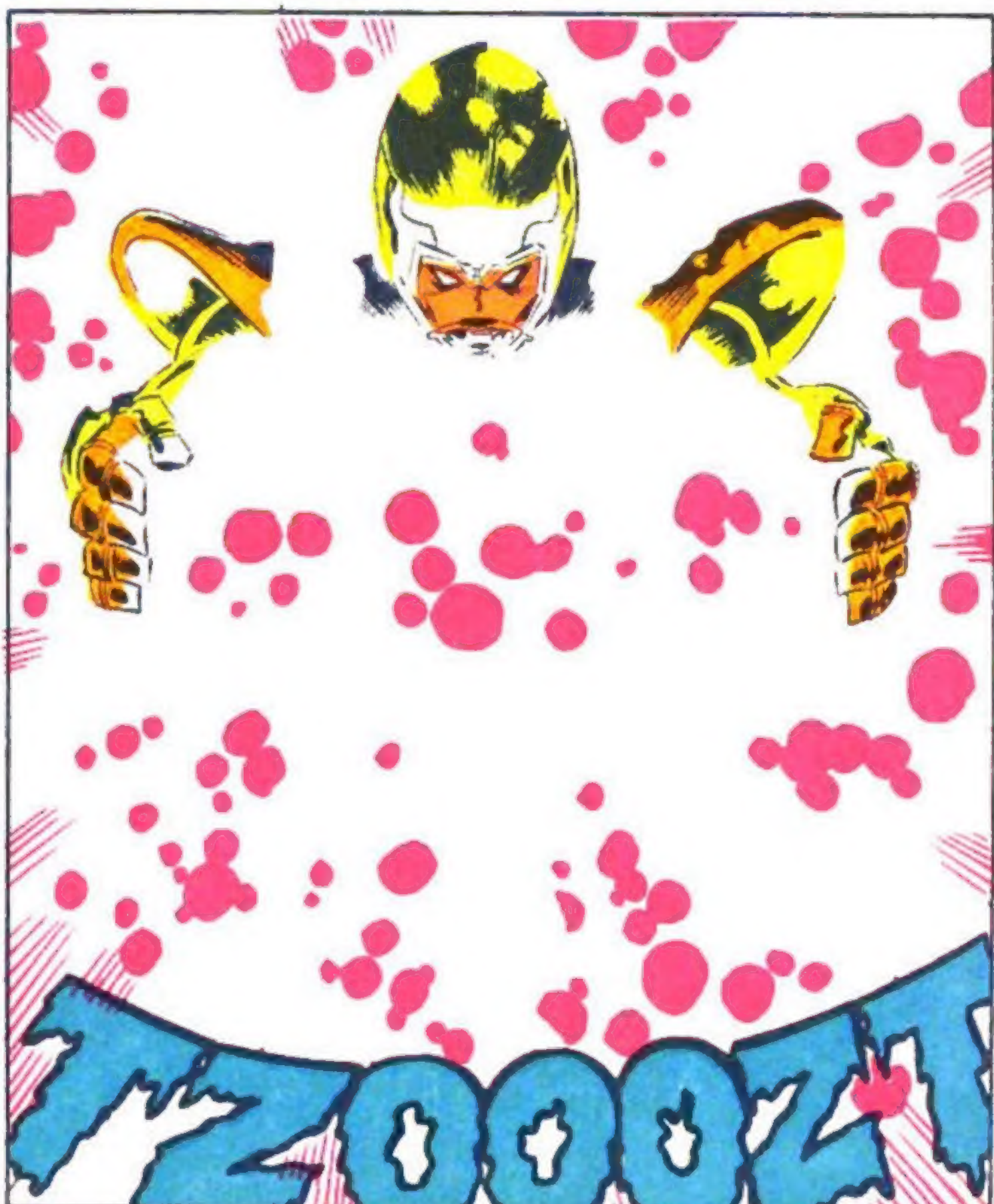
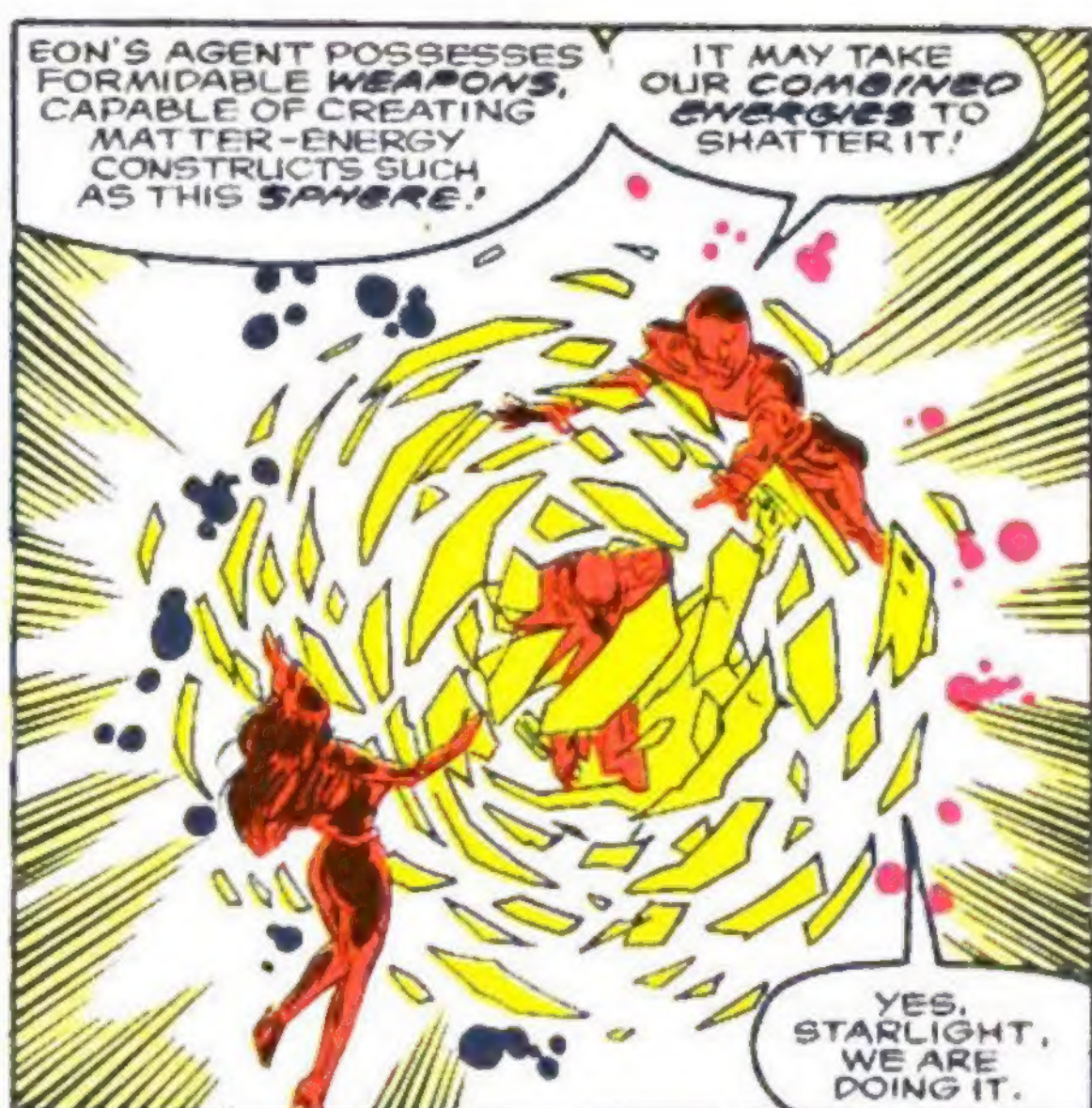
YOU MEAN
KILL HIM?
I--WHY?

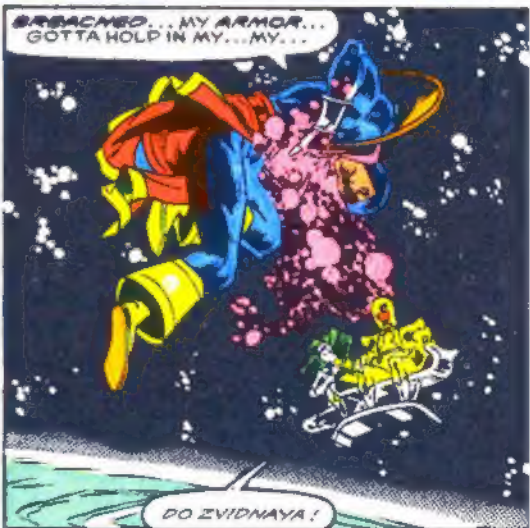
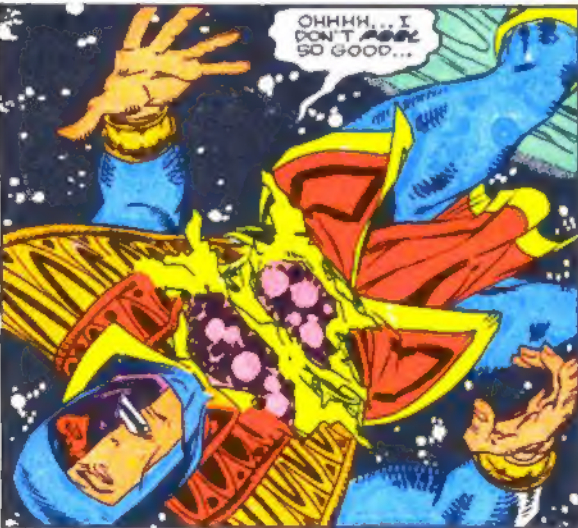
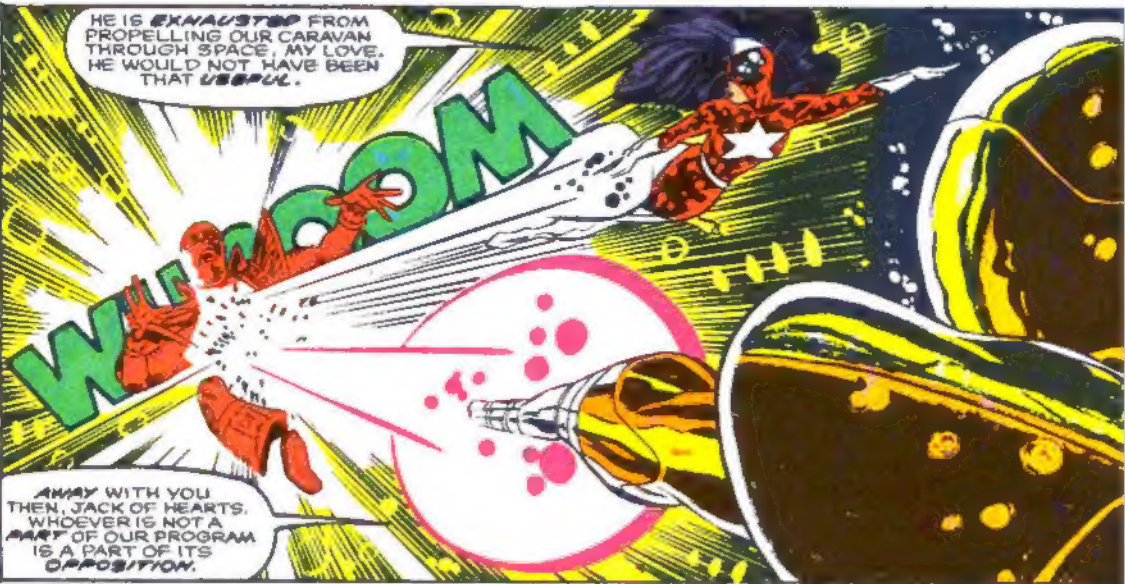
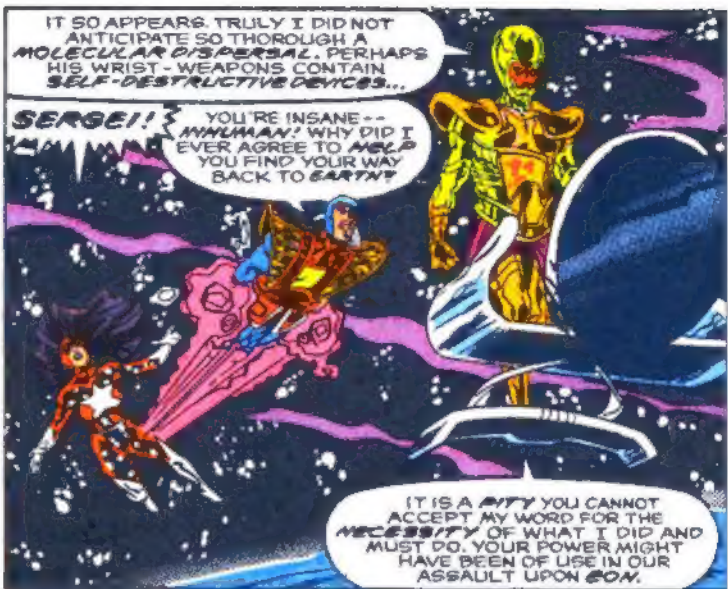
IF YOU DO NOT
HAVE THE **STOMACH**
TO COMPLETE THE TASK,
THEN I **SHALL** STAND
BACK WHILE I **SMATTER**
THIS FEEBLE SPHERE!

AND ONCE QUASAR'S
OUT OF THE WAY,
NOTHING CAN
STOP US FROM
MAKING OUR
PRESENCE KNOWN
TO **EON!**

EON? WHO'S **EON?**
WHAT'S THIS ALL
ABOUT, SERGEI?

EON IS ONLY THE
GREATEST MENACE
TO **EXISTENCE**
OUR WORLD HAS
EVER **SEEN!**







COME BACK HERE
AND SEE WHAT
YOU'VE DONE
TO ME!

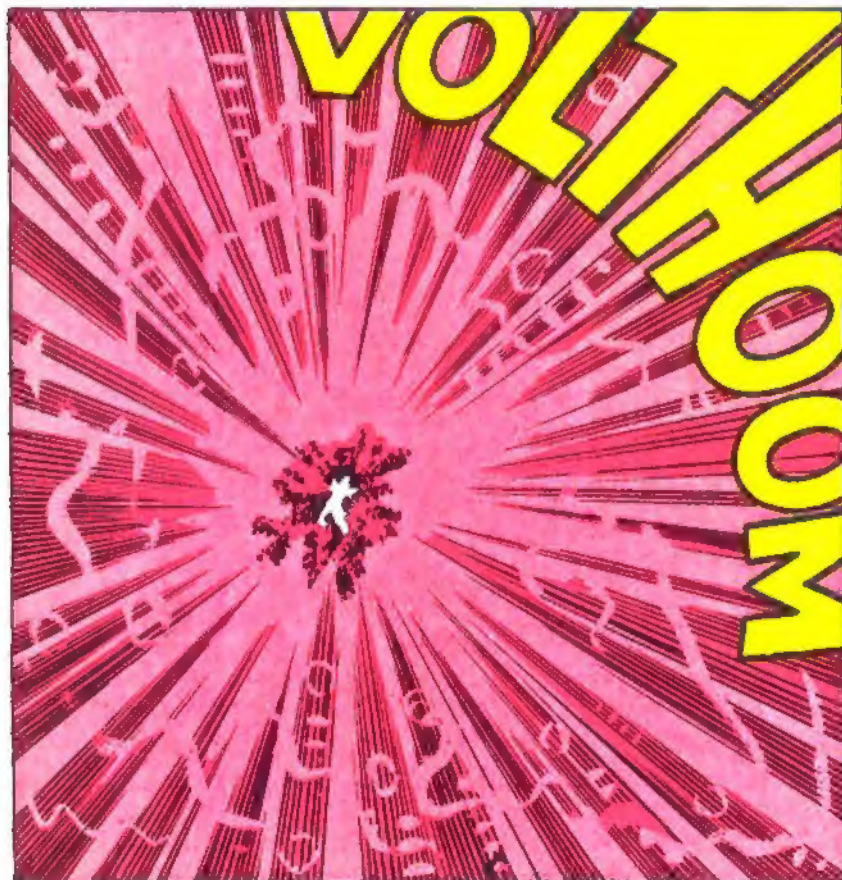
THE ZERO-
ENERGY
INSIDE ME--
LEAKING OUT!

I-I'M GOING
TO EXPLODE!



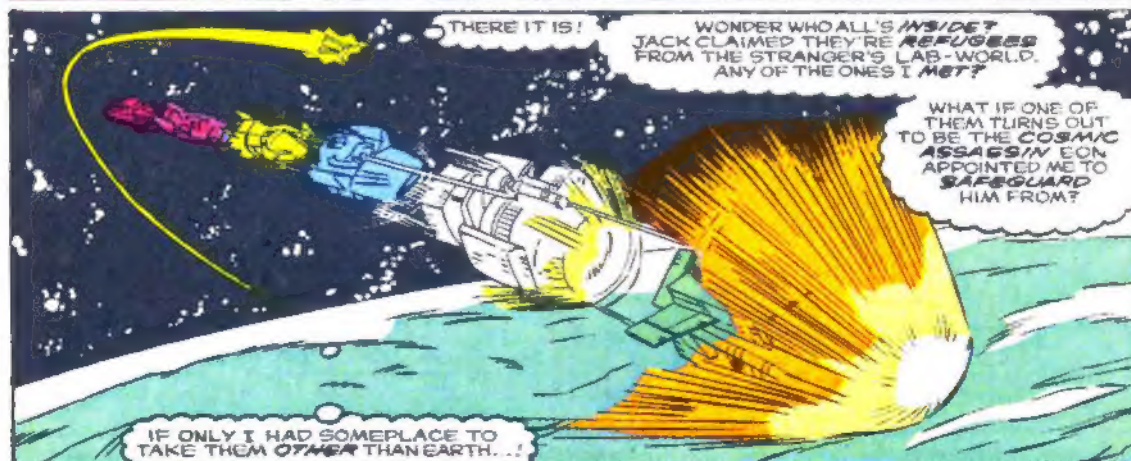
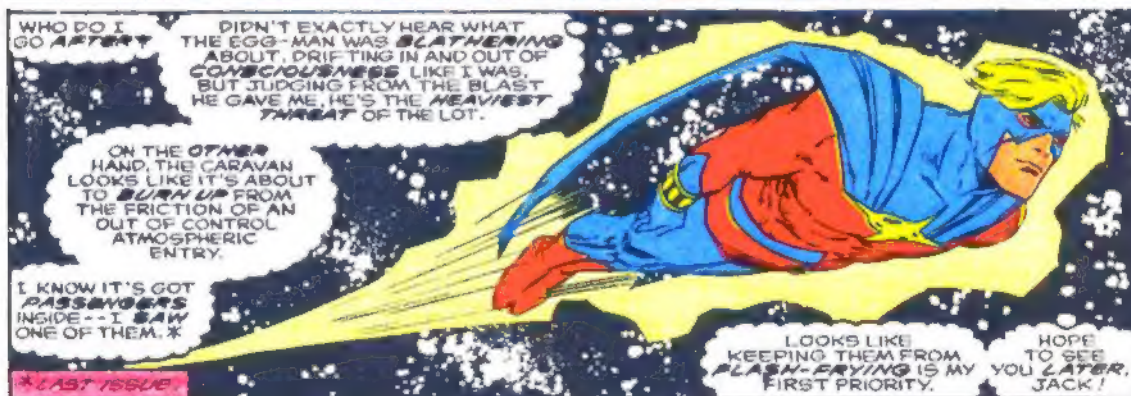
BLAST IT
ALL. IF I'M
GOING TO BLOW
UP, I'M GOING
TO TAKE YOU
TWO WITH ME!

TO PROPEL HIMSELF
TOWARD US, HE WILL
HAVE TO TAKE HANDS OFF
HOLES IN ARMOR.



AS I THOUGHT.

THE SHOCKWAVE
HE HAS GENERATED
WILL TAKE US TO
MOTHER WORLD
ALL THE FASTER.







I DON'T HAVE A WHOLE LOT OF TIME. WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE?

I KNOW ALL ABOUT THE STRANGER. YOU SPEAK ENGLISH! WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

I CALL MYSELF THE GARGOYLE, AND LIKE THE REST OF US HERE I WAS ABDUCTED BY THE STRANGER FOR--

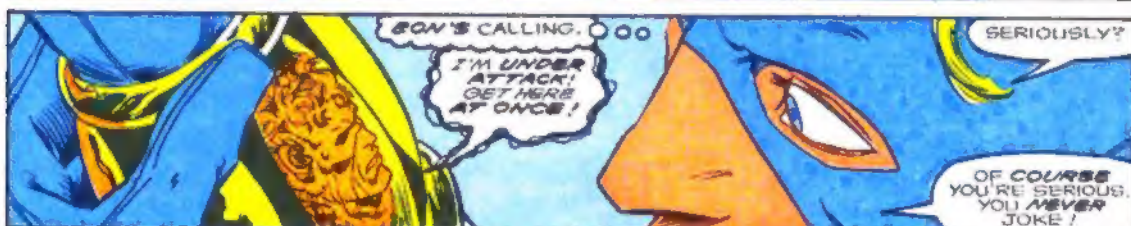


I WAS BORN IN AMERICA-- CHRISTIANBORO, VIRGINIA, TO BE--

WE'RE ALL FROM EARTH, BLONDIE-- THAT'S WHY WE POOLED OUR RESOURCES TO GET BACK HERE.

FUNNY, BUT YOU GUYS DON'T LOOK--

EXCUSE ME.



SON'S CALLING. 000

I'M UNDER ATTACK! GET HERE AT ONCE!

SERIOUSLY?

OF COURSE YOU'RE SERIOUS. YOU NEVER JOKE!



I'M ON MY WAY!

GOTTA GO! YOU FOLKS STAY OUT OF TROUBLE OR YOU'LL HEAR FROM ME!

HEY! YOU CAN'T LEAVE US HERE!

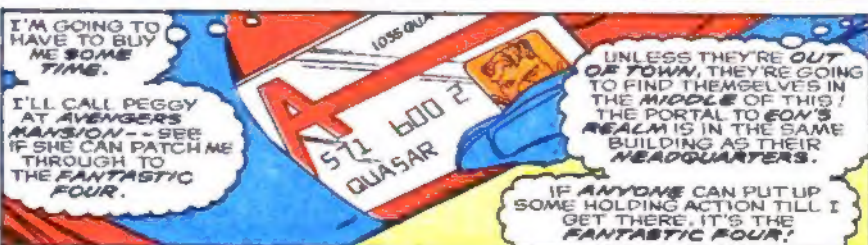


I'VE NEVER HEARD EON SOUND SO... SO MANIC.

I GUESS THIS IS IT! THE BIG MOMENT I'VE BEEN SWEATING OVER SINCE EON APPOINTED ME PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE.

AM I UP FOR IT? DON'T KNOW, BUT I'M AS READY AS I'M EVER GOING TO BE!

UNLESS I WANT TO RIP ANOTHER HOLE IN THE OZONE, I'M LIMITED TO NOW FAST! I CAN ZOOM BACK TO NEW YORK.

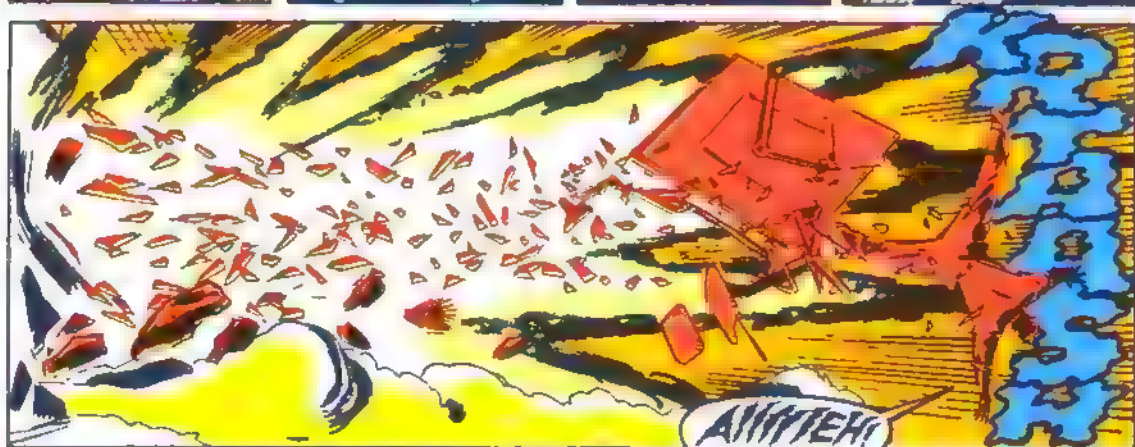


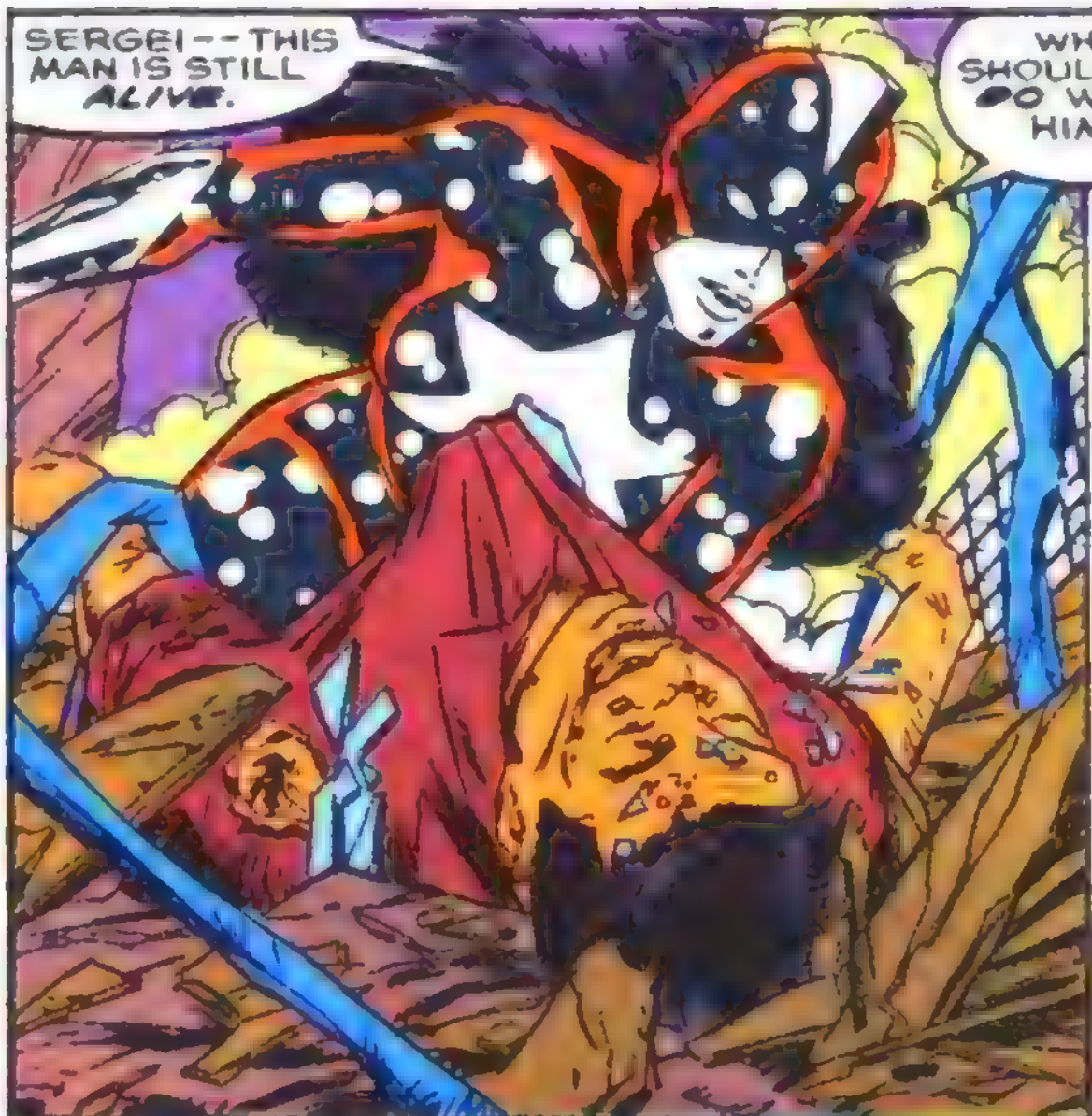
I'M GOING TO HAVE TO BUY ME SOME TIME.

I'LL CALL PEGGY AT AVENGERS MANSION-- SEE IF SHE CAN PATCH ME THROUGH TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR.

UNLESS THEY'RE OUT OF TOWN, THEY'RE GOING TO FIND THEMSELVES IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS! THE PORTAL TO EON'S REALM IS IN THE SAME BUILDING AS THEIR HEADQUARTERS.

IF ANYONE CAN PUT UP SOME HOLDING ACTION TILL I GET THERE, IT'S THE FANTASTIC FOUR!





SERGEI-- THIS MAN IS STILL ALIVE.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH HIM?

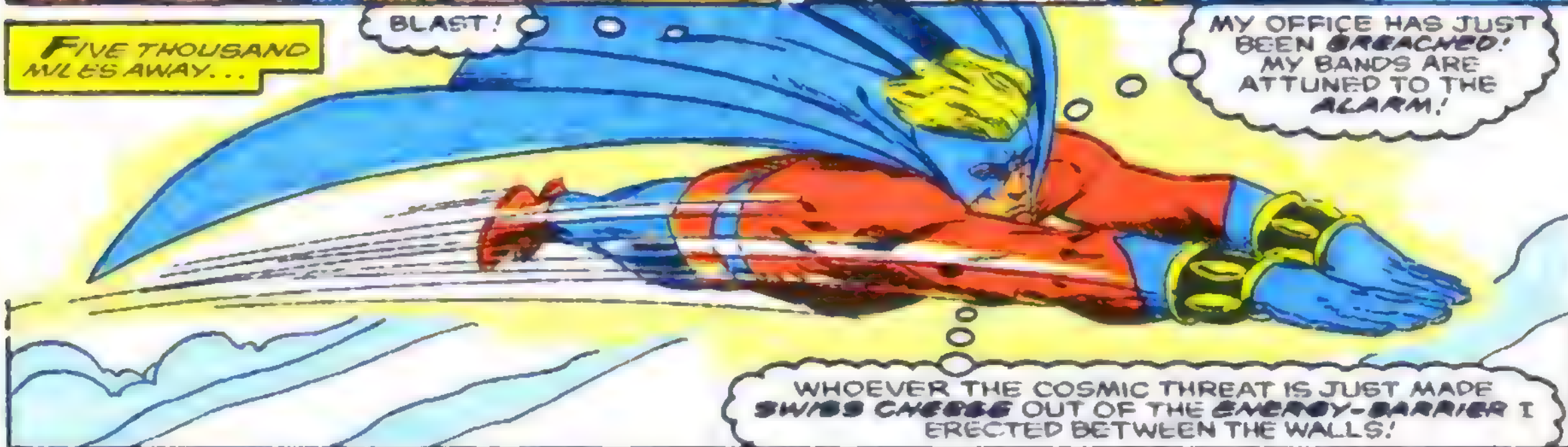
HE IS INCONSEQUENTIAL. DO WITH HIM AS YOU WILL.

STAND GUARD AGAINST ALL INTRUDERS, MY LOVE. I GO TO RIP THE COSMOS OF THE EXECRABLE SON!



FIVE THOUSAND MILES AWAY...

BLAST!



MY OFFICE HAS JUST BEEN BREACHED! MY BANDS ARE ATTUNED TO THE ALARM!

WHOEVER THE COSMIC THREAT IS JUST MADE SWISS CHEESE OUT OF THE ENERGY-BARRIER I ERECTED BETWEEN THE WALLS!



SON! HOW YOU DOING? I'M STILL FIVE MINUTES OR SO AWAY!

IS THERE ANY EVASIVE MANEUVER-- ANYTHING YOU CAN DO TO HIDE FROM THE ASSASSIN ONCE HE MAKES IT THROUGH THE PORTAL?

I'LL TRY.

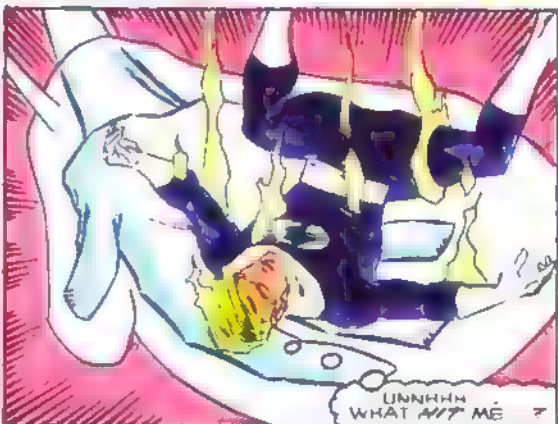
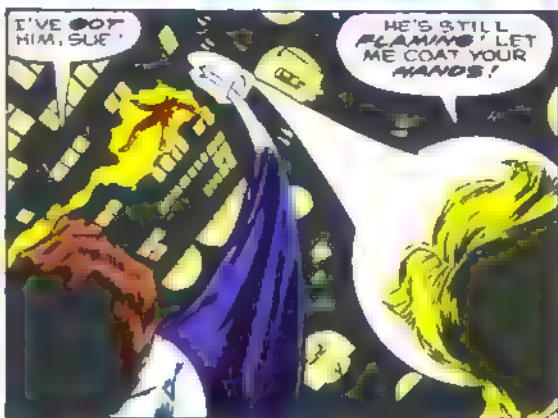
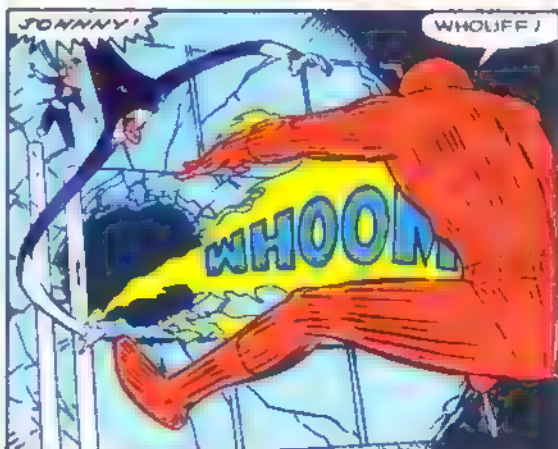
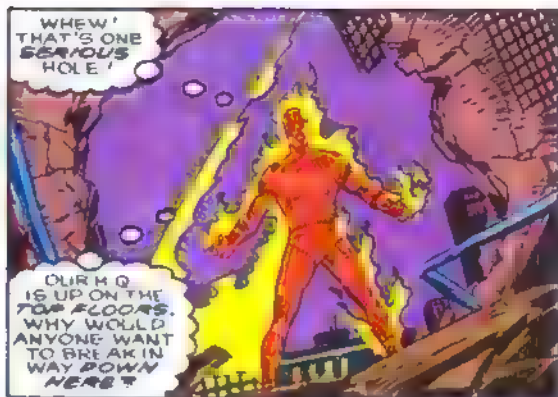


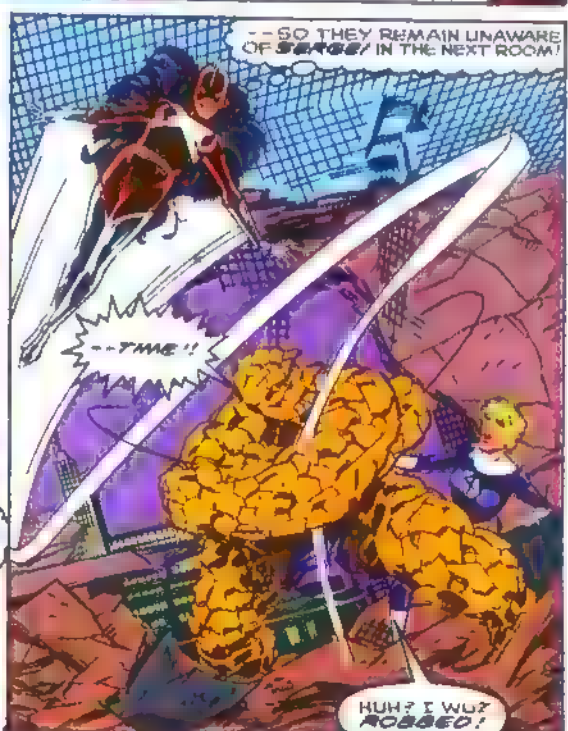
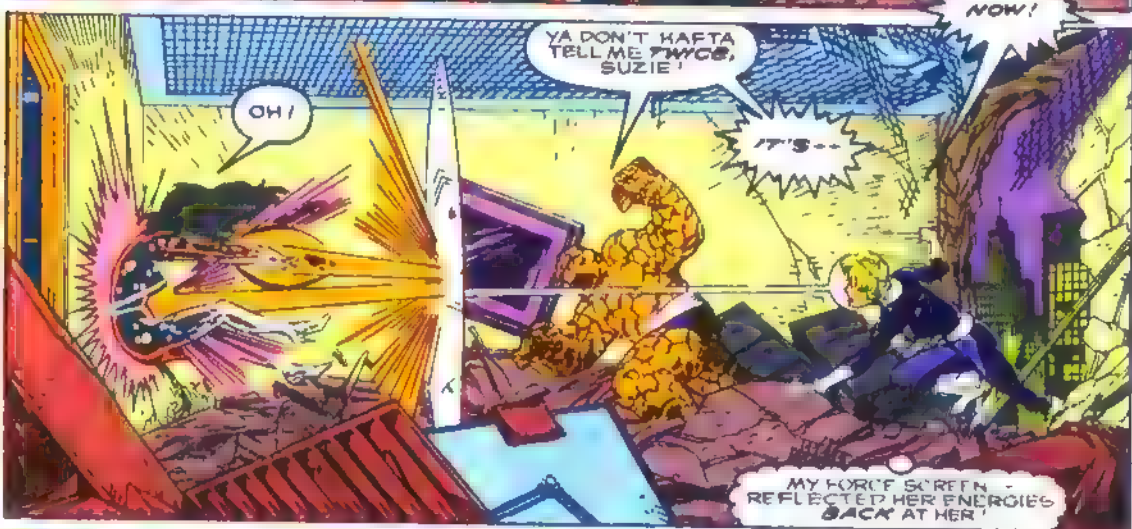
THIS IS SO FRUSTRATING. MAN. I WISH I'D HAVE THOUGHT TO PREPARE SOME SORT OF EVACUATION ROUTINE-- LIKE A FIRE DRILL OR SOMETHING!

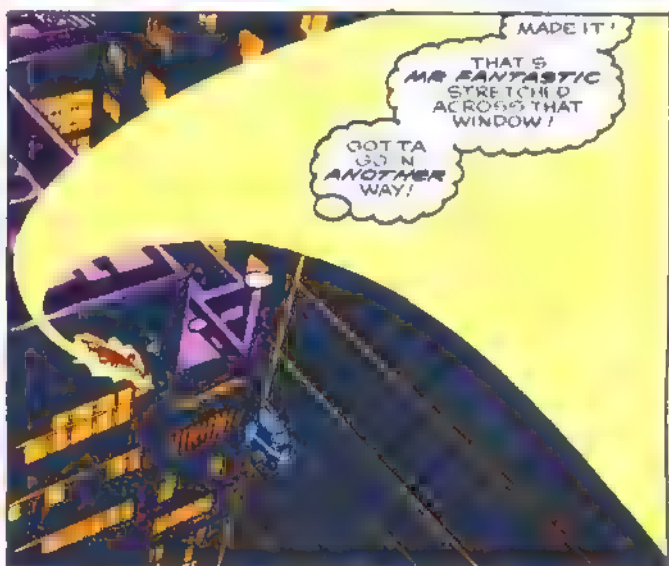
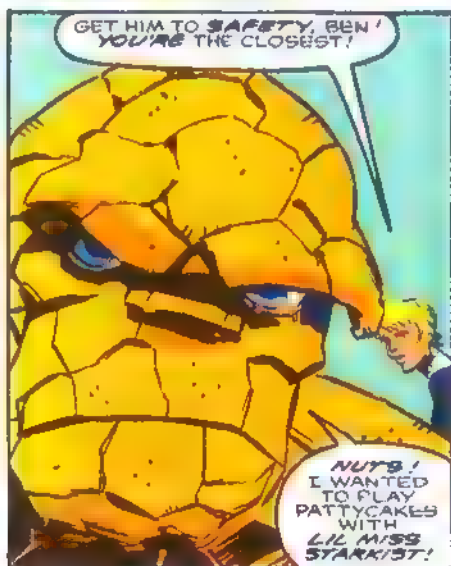
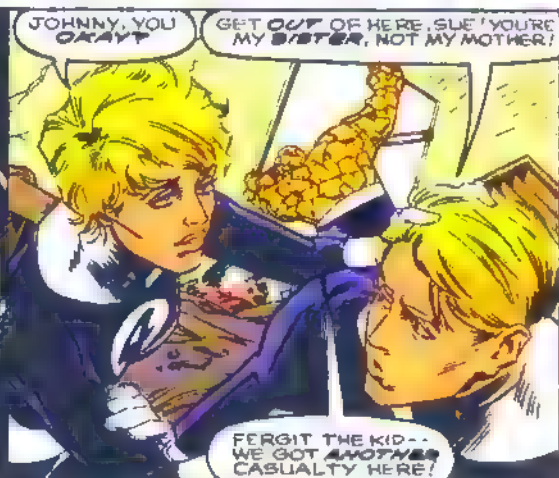
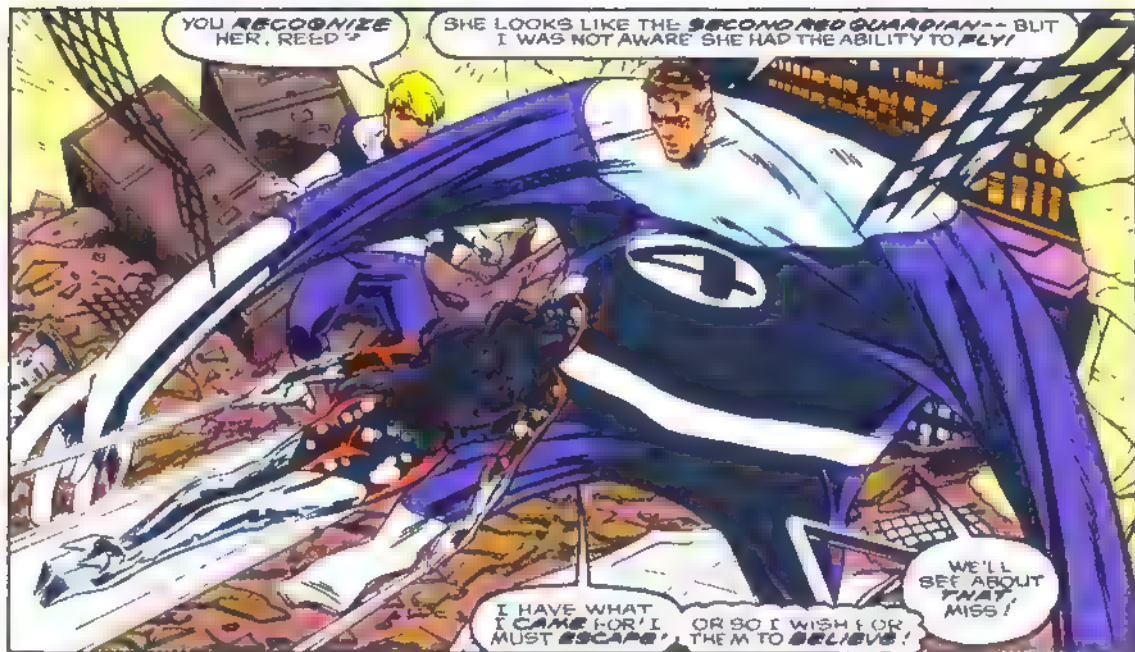
I'M SUCH AN IDIOT!!!

WHOA COOL DOWN NO TIME FOR THAT NOW. GOTTA PSYCH MYSELF UP FOR THE FIGHT OF MY LIFE!

AT LEAST I WAS ABLE TO GET HOLD OF--



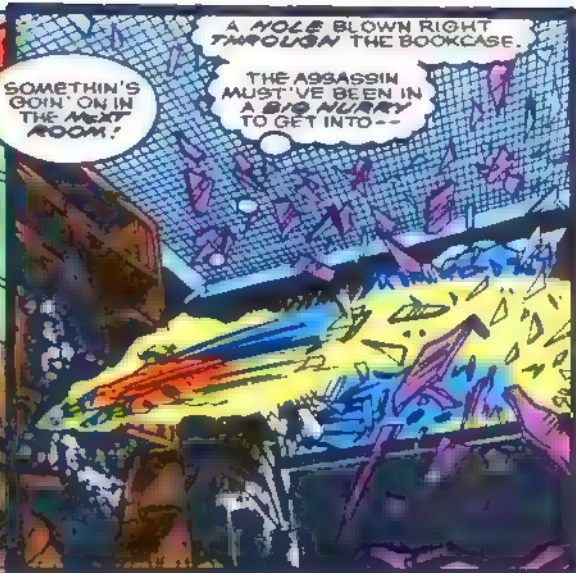






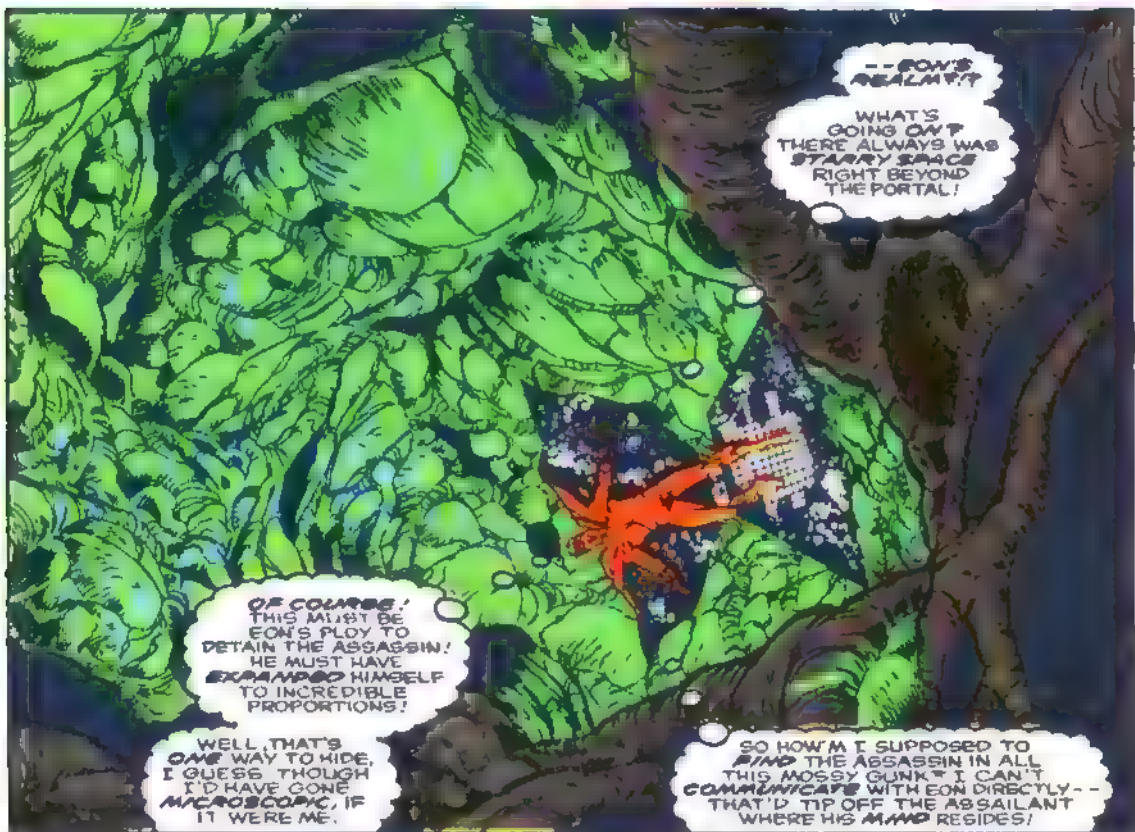
HEY! WUZZAT'!

SOMETHIN'S GOIN' ON IN THE NEXT ROOM!



A HOLE BLOWN RIGHT THROUGH THE BOOKCASE.

THE ASSASSIN MUST'VE BEEN IN A BIG HURRY TO GET INTO--



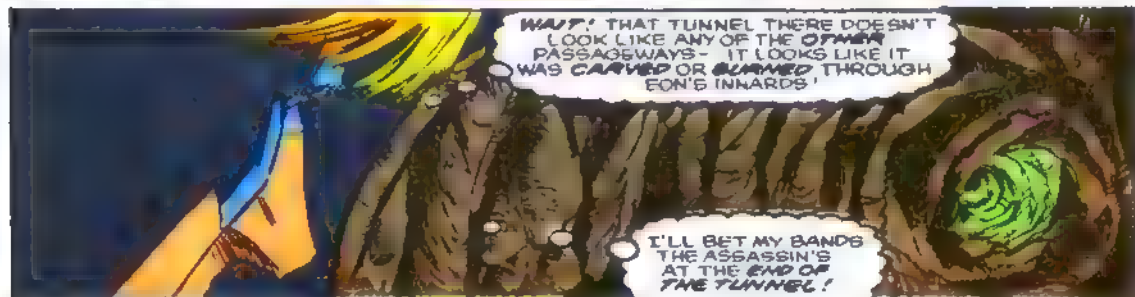
--EON'S REALM?!

WHAT'S GOING ON? THERE ALWAYS WAS STARRY SPACE RIGHT BEYOND THE PORTAL!

OF COURSE! THIS MUST BE EON'S PLOY TO DETAIN THE ASSASSIN! HE MUST HAVE EXPANDED HIMSELF TO INCREDIBLE PROPORTIONS!

WELL, THAT'S ONE WAY TO HIDE, I GUESS. THOUGH I'D HAVE GONE MICROSCOPIC, IF IT WERE ME.

SO HOW'M I SUPPOSED TO FIND THE ASSASSIN IN ALL THIS MOSSY GUNK? I CAN'T COMMUNICATE WITH EON DIRECTLY-- THAT'D TIP OFF THE ASSAILANT WHERE HIS MIND RESIDES!



WUT? THAT TUNNEL THERE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANY OF THE OTHER PASSAGEWAYS-- IT LOOKS LIKE IT WAS CARVED OR BURNED THROUGH EON'S INNARDS!

I'LL BET MY BANDS THE ASSASSIN'S AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL!



I WAS RIGHT!
I FOUND HIM!
BETTER BRACE
MYSELF - **THIS
IS IT!**

ALL LIVING THINGS HAVE
HEARTS, EON--

--CENTRAL
RESPONSIBILITIES
OF LIFE
FORCE--

--AND IT
IS ONLY A
MATTER OF
TIME
BEFORE I--

MY THRUSTS--
WAAAAHHH???



YOU!?!

THAT'S RIGHT, EGGMAN!
TAPPING INTO THE ENERGY
YOU'RE GENERATING!

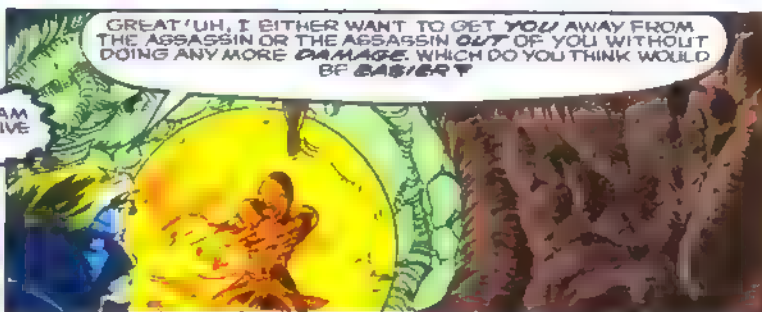
DARE NOT COUNTER
WITH BLASTS OF
MY OWN-- THIS IS EON
I'M FIGHTING IN!
DON'T WANT TO HIT
ANYTHING VITAL!



HAVE TO
DO THE OLD
ENCOMPASS--
THE ENEMY IN--
A BUBBLE
TRICK!

EON! I'M
HERE! HOW
YOU
DOING?!!

I AM
ALIVE



GREAT! UH, I EITHER WANT TO GET YOU AWAY FROM
THE ASSASSIN OR THE ASSASSIN OUT OF YOU WITHOUT
DOING ANY MORE DAMAGE. WHICH DO YOU THINK WOULD
BE EASIER?



HERE QUASAR THIS IS
WHAT HE IS LOOKING
FOR - MY HEART

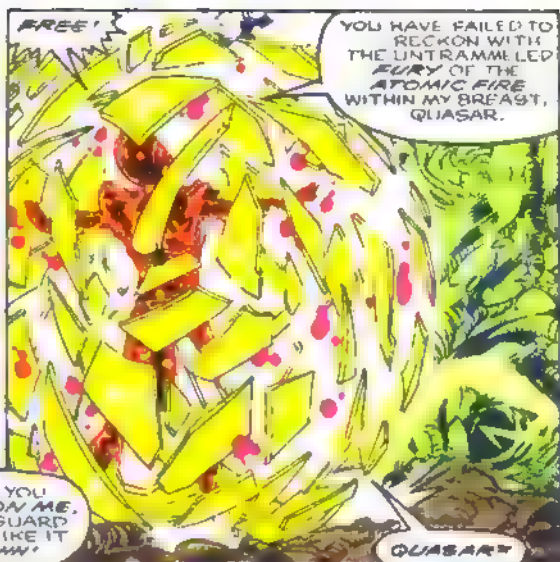
TAKE IT,
PROTECT IT,
AND FLEE FROM
HERE. HE IS
CERTAIN TO
FOLLOW.



UH, ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS? CAN YOUR BODY LIVE WITH YOUR HEART DETACHED?

YES, I CAN SUSPEND MY LIFE FUNCTIONS FOR APPROXIMATELY 3.2% OF YOUR EARTHLY HOURS.

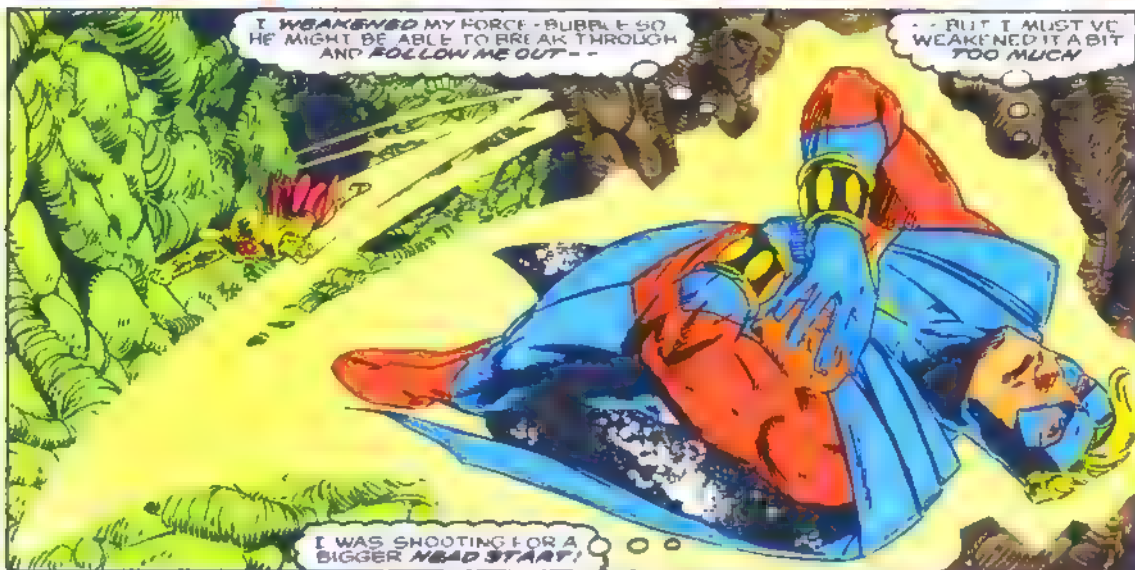
WELL, OKAY YOU CAN COUNT ON ME, EON -- I'LL GUARD YOUR HEART (LIKE IT WAS MY OWN)



FREE!

YOU HAVE FAILED TO RECKON WITH THE UNTRAMMELED FURY OF THE ATOMIC FIRE WITHIN MY BREAST, QUASAR.

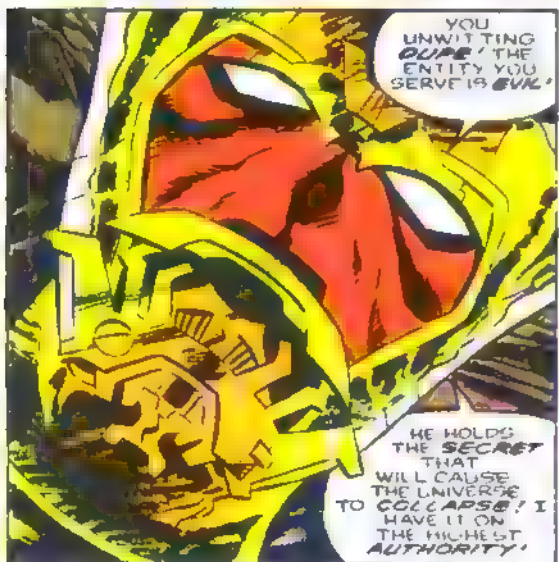
QUASAR



I WEAKENED MY FORCE - BUBBLE SO HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO BREAK THROUGH AND FOLLOW ME OUT --

-- BUT I MUST'VE WEAKENED IT A BIT TOO MUCH

I WAS SHOOTING FOR A BIGGER HEAD START!



YOU UNWITTING DUPE! THE ENTITY YOU SERVE IS EVIL!

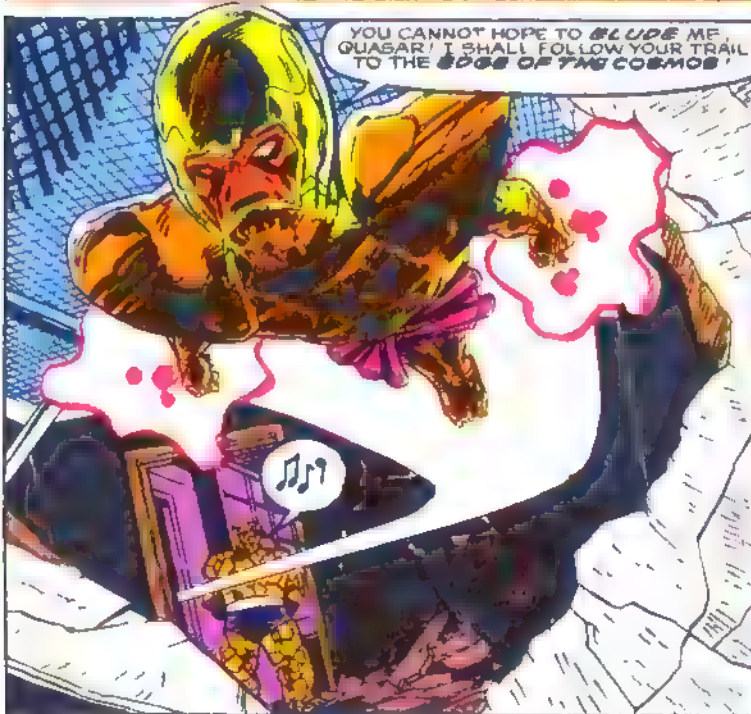
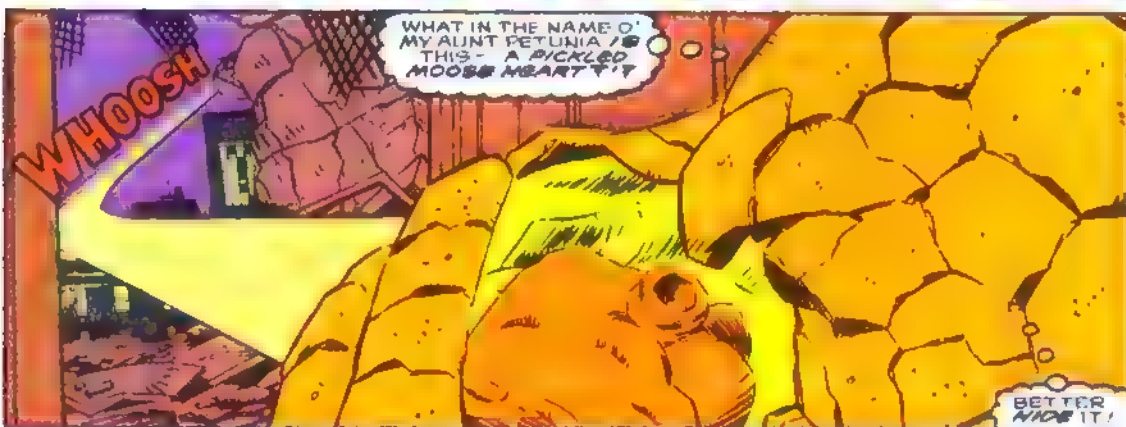
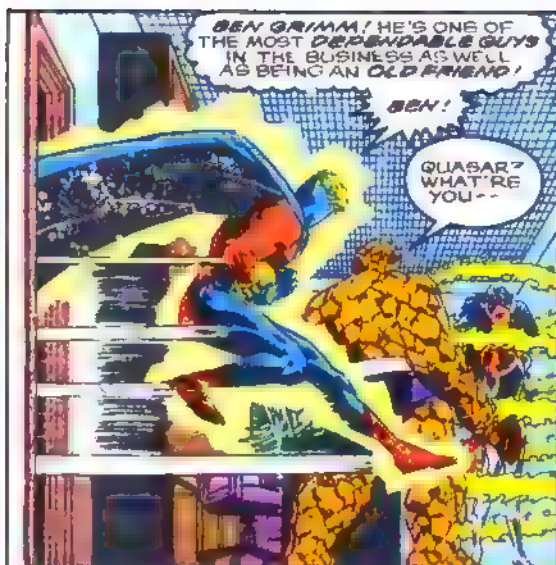
HE HOLDS THE SECRET THAT WILL CAUSE THE UNIVERSE TO COLLAPSE! I HAVE IT ON THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY!

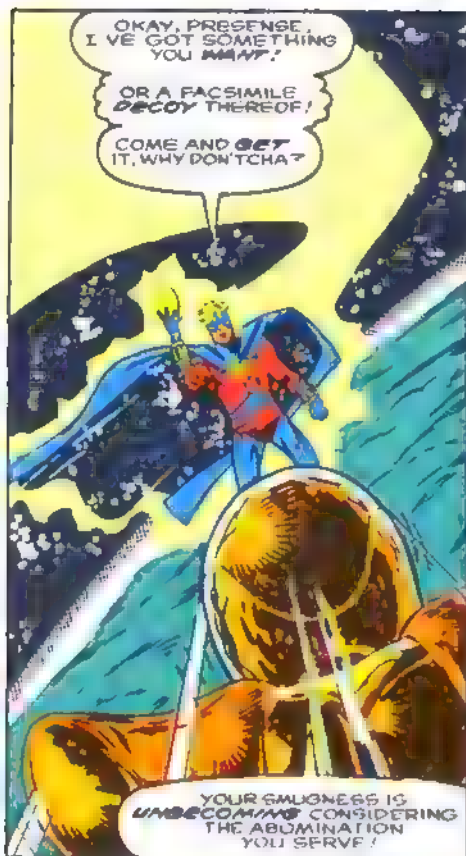


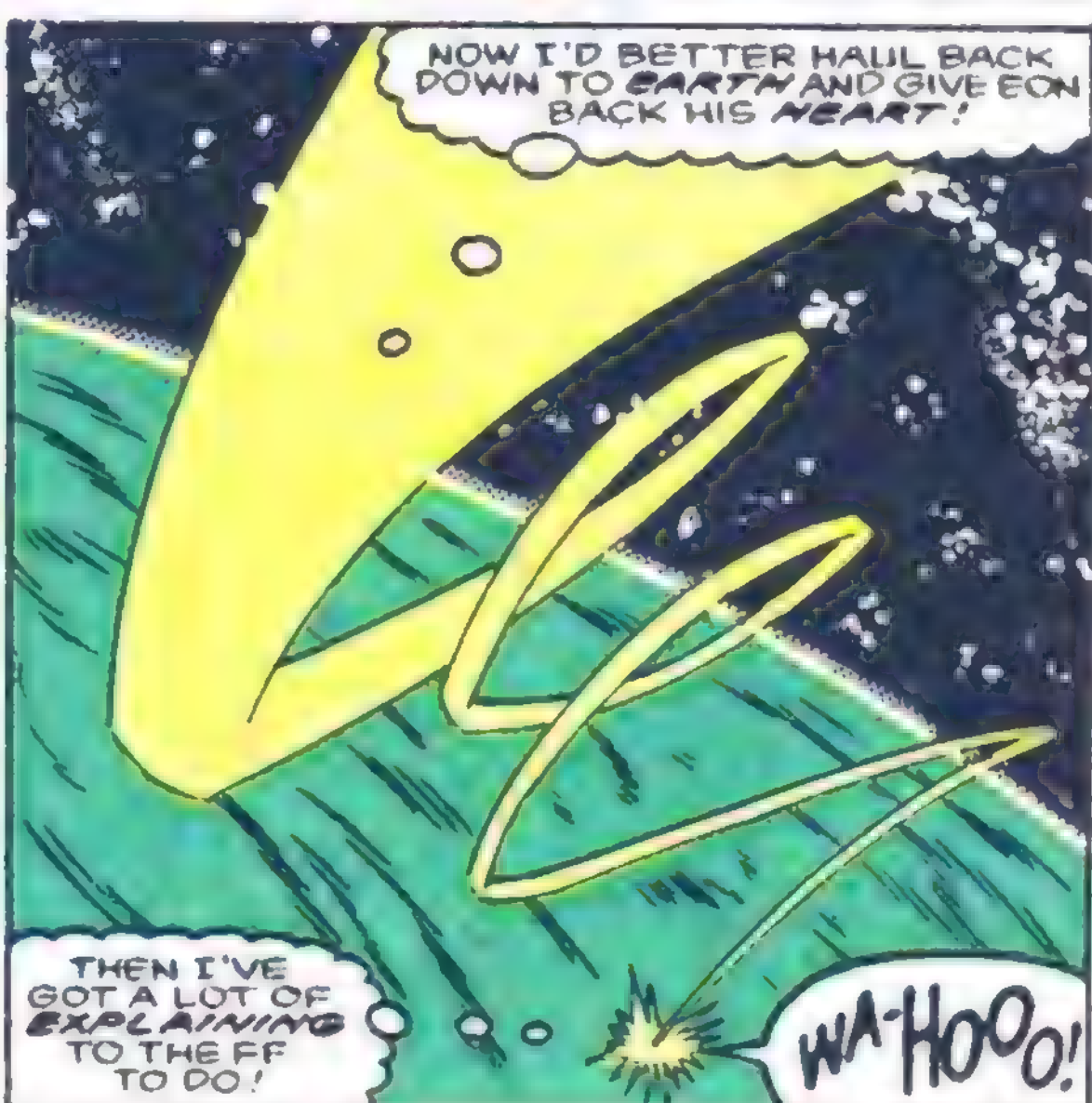
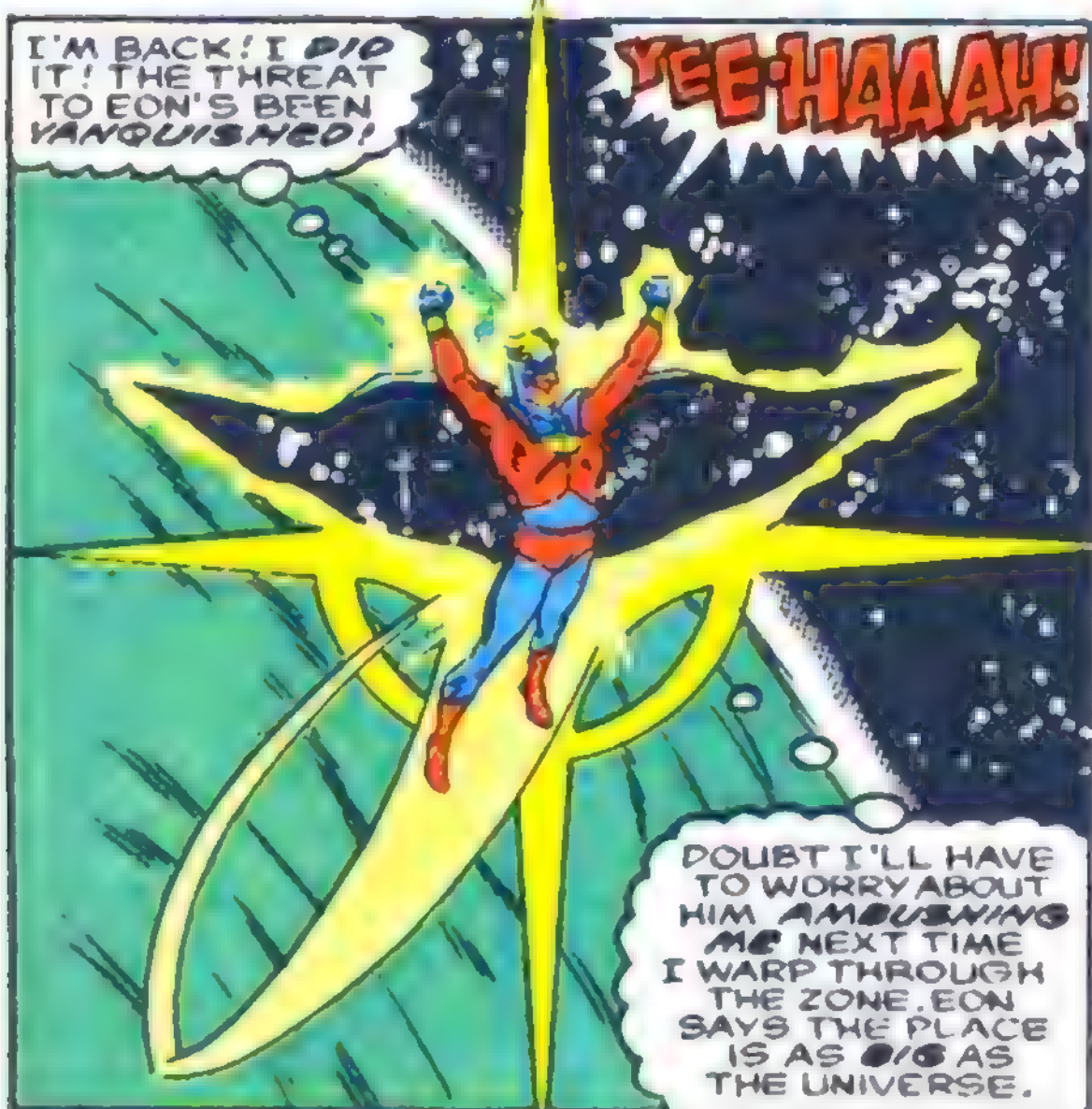
WHAT WAS HE BABBLING ABOUT?

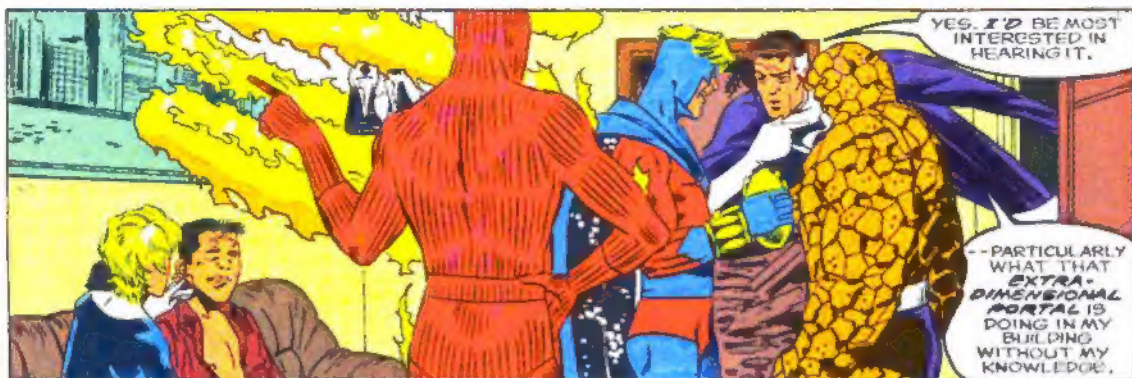
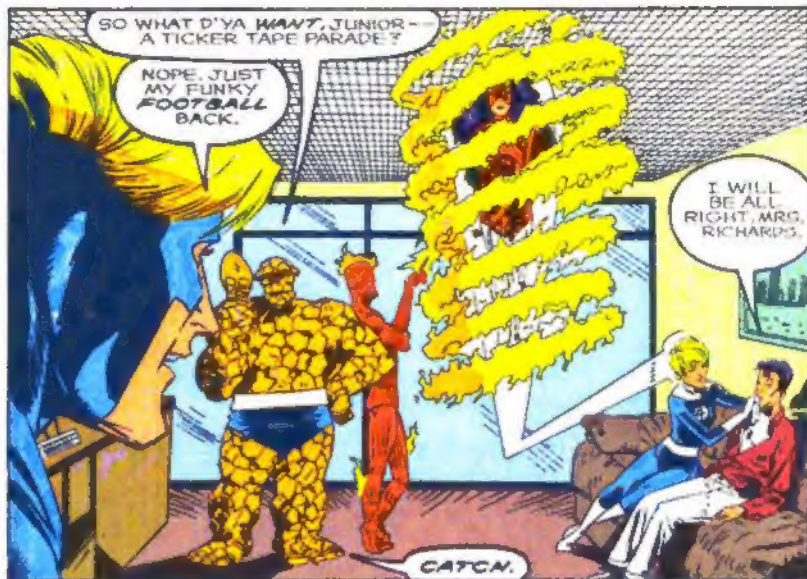
WHOA -- QUASAR?

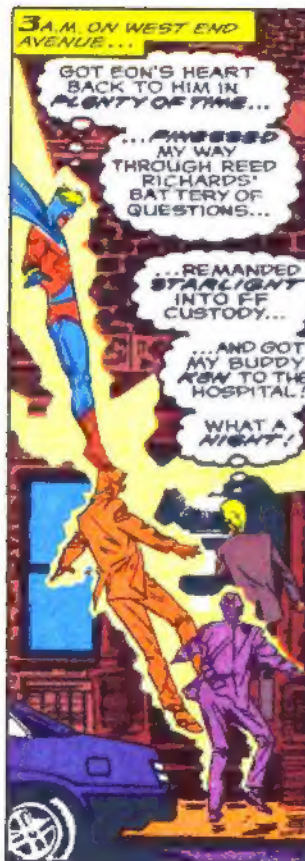
GET OUT OF THE WAY, SIR! THERE'S A DEVIL NIPPING AT MY HEELS!











3 A.M. ON WEST END AVENUE...

GOT EON'S HEART BACK TO HIM IN PLINY OF TIME...

...FINISHED MY WAY THROUGH REED RICHARDS' BATTERY OF QUESTIONS...

...REMANDED STARLIGHT INTO FF CUSTODY...

...AND GOT MY BUDDY KEN TO THE HOSPITAL!

WHAT A NIGHT!



KAYLA...? MAK...?

UH...SORRY. I DIDN'T--



HEY, QUAZE! WAIT! QUAZE--!



FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT...

BLAST IT ALL AWAY!

I KNEW MAK WAS FAST, BUT HOW'D HE MOVE IN ON KAYLA SO DARN QUICKLY? I ONLY LEFT HER-- WHAT SEVEN HOURS AGO!

COULD'VE SWORN SHE SAID--AH. WHAT DOES IT MATTER?



MUSTN'T LET MY CRUMMY PERSONAL LIFE RUIN FOR ME THE GREAT VICTORY I--

DAD...?

DAD! MY GOD-- WHAT-- WHAT--?

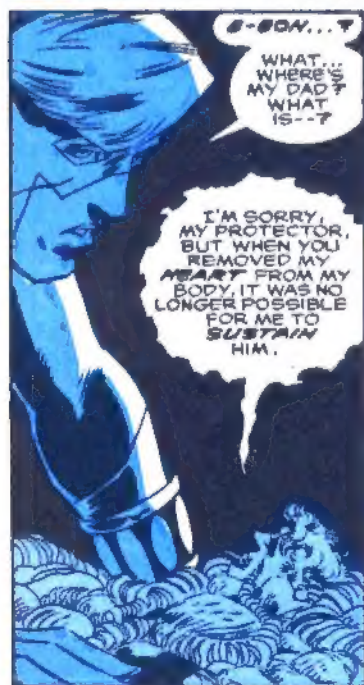
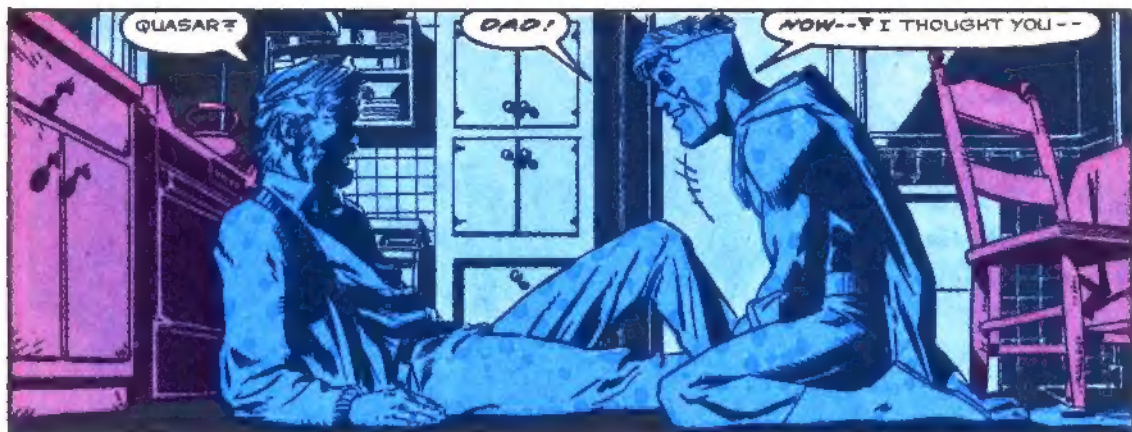


HE'S NOT BREATHING!

WHUUUUUUU!

BREATHE, DAD, PLEASE--

NO NO NO NO NO!





AWARE OF YOUR EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT TO THIS MAN, I FELT THAT COPING WITH HIS *DEMISE* WOULD IMPAIR YOUR ABILITY TO PERFORM AS PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE.

IS THAT *SO* WELL, YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT?

I QUIT--AS OF RIGHT NOW!



YOU CANNOT. THE QUANTUM-BANDS ARE *UNREMOVABLE* UNTIL YOUR DEATH.

THEN MAYBE YOU'D BETTER *KILL ME* SO YOU CAN TAKE 'EM BACK!



I DO NOT KILL. IF YOU THINK I KILLED YOUR FATHER, I ASSURE YOU,

IF YOU CAN'T TAKE THEM FROM ME, THEN I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO KEEP THEM!



BUT AS OF RIGHT NOW, EON--I'M NO LONGER YOUR COSMIC WHIPPING BOY! GET OUT OF HERE--I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!



BUT I AM UNCERTAIN IF THE *PRESENCE* WAS TRULY THE COSMIC THREAT--!

YOU'RE JUST SAYING THAT! WHY SHOULD I BELIEVE ANYTHING YOU HAVE TO SAY ANYMORE?

NOW... GET... LOST!

SPUTT



SOMEWHERE ON EARTH, AN ANOMALOUS FIGURE SAVES DROPS...

MY PLAN PROCEEDS Apace. IN ONE NIGHT, I HAVE NOT ONLY CAUSED QUASAR TO DROP HIS GUARD AGAINST THE THREAT HE WAS APPOINTED TO COMBAT.

-- BUT I HAVE ALSO DRIVEN A WEDGE BETWEEN MY TWO GREATEST ADVERSARIES.

NOW, BY THE TIME THEY REALIZE WHAT I'VE DONE, IT WILL BE TOO LATE!

NEXT: **THE ENEMY REVEALED!**